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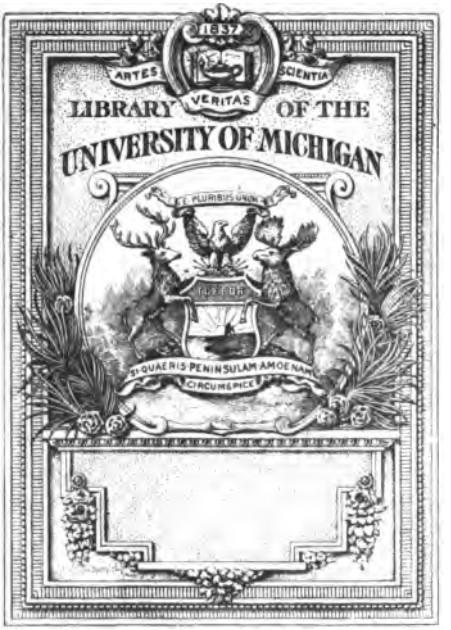
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THE MOONLIGHT BANQUET

THE MOONLIGHT BANQUET

A COMEDY

By Lewis Prather Puterbaugh

1910
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TO THE READER

THE MOONLIGHT BANQUET is a satire on flambouyant speaking. The moral is that the poor should be remembered.

In justice to myself I wish to declare that I had the idea of having animals think and speak before Rostand's play was produced.

L. P. PUTERBAUGH.

North Yakima, Washington.

THE MOONLIGHT BANQUET

BULLOCK	Star
FIRST STEER	Leading Man
FIRST COW	Leading Woman
SECOND STEER	Villain
FOURTH STEER	Flambouyant
THIRD HEIFER	Sentimental

THE MOONLIGHT BANQUET

BULLOCK, *Head of the Herd.*
STEERS, *First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth.*
HEIFERS, *First, Second, Third and Fourth.*
CALVES, *First, Second, and Third.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Squire Brown's green pasture field near a cotton-wood grove on the Arkansas river bottom in eastern Colorado.*

TIME—*Spring.*

Enter all but Fifth Steer, Fourth Heifer, Third and Fourth Cows, and Third Calf. Enter high spirited with much frolicking, chasing and butting one another for a few moments, then quiet down.

BULLOCK—So ho! at last we're given our liberty
To chase and gambol on the meadow field
And give our bubbling spirits full wide swing
In this our joyous Spring-time festival.

FIRST STEER—No more corrals and living on
Alfalfa hay, and with no change of diet.
Now for green grass, then more green grass!

REST OF HERD—Just so!

FIRST HEIFER—(*As all begin grazing*)
This grass so green and juicy doth excite
The flow of gastric juice, and brings to us
The sense of gratifying our ambition
Two-fold, though thus so prematurely,
'As though one act were not enough to fill
Our stretching paunches.

SECOND STEER—Philosophy for you;
But grass for me: 'Twere well to meditate
On abstract things, when concrete is dismissed.

FIRST HEIFER—Gratification then, I take from you,
Is not concrete: thus you commit yourself,
And so exchange, at your expense, my point
For blissful ignorance. (*Turns saucily away.*)

SECOND STEER—(*Aside*)—That's one on me;
But I will even her—the jade.

THIRD STEER—It serves you well; hereafter weigh your words
And speak not hastily; for even though
We're in the midst of joyous festival
Occuring naturally in the cycle
Of our existence, your quick bluntness
Would have more weight, and serve you better
If spoken in some leveling disaster.

FIRST COW—(*Butts Second Steer*)
Indeed we are the sole possessors
Of unalloyed joy which is so considered

By that pert magpie in yon cottonwood,
Harshly and shrilly uttering commands
To other feathered tribe, so haughtily,
That seemingly, he were indulging
In some ambition highly to our credit—
Selfish marauder that he is.

SECOND COW—(*To First Cow*)
If judging from the frolics of our calves
Disporting on the river bottom green,
'Antics were better savored than the grass
Which is not so appealing to young kind
As it is in maturity of flesh
Since milk is relished more than vegetation
To off-spring not yet used to the ways
Of grown up bovine kind.

FIRST COW—Fresh grass for us
Will make our calves more strong and straight,
Lengthen their necks and legs; then grass will be more liked
To appetites now whetted by racing.

SECOND CALF—(*To First Calf of First Cow*)
Though young and novices in the art of racing
We'll handicap ourselves and race the river
'Across the pasture field—two times at that,
And then we'll beat the river Arkansas.

FIRST CALF—Just so! away we go!
(*Calves race up and down, while the two cows watch fondly. Calves re-enter and join the cows.*)

SECOND HEIFER—(*To Third Heifer*)
I wonder if they could be called upon
To breast the Arkansas and swim across,
Then back again without their weakening.
Methinks they could not.

THIRD HEIFER—No; their timidity
Would ill their cause to breast the stream
Just when cool heads and strong resolve
Would turn the tide among experienced.
Let's to the river, and imbibe some drink.

SECOND HEIFER—Agreed! for company is better
Than drinking alone, and our dialogue
More entertaining than solitude. (*Exit both to river*)

FOURTH STEER—Propitious to our own cause of joyousness
Incident to our feasting sumptuously
On the greensward, there is the feeling
Of exultant joy and unalloyed sense
Of pleasure that we have inaugurated
The gayest season of the year in which
The singing birds give voice in cheerful tones,
Swelling their breasts and chirping Easter songs;
Flying from tree to tree in matin song:
Bird frolics, as it were in imitation
Of our manœuvers in this pasture.

BULLOCK—Right well you have expressed the sentiment
On this occasion of festivity,

Though in a manner, somewhat flambouyantly;
For where is there in all the realm of Nature
A scene more pleasing to behold, and one
In which the force of confined enthusiasm
Doth overflow as if it were released
From its compressed potentiality:
Witness, the gamboling on springing turf
When first we entered; the chasing and the butting;
The racing of young calves; some merriment
For each and all, while hurriedly eating—
Sampling the grass! oh no! for well we know
The qualities of palate-tickling grass—
The snatching, here and there, of bits of tender blades
Does only manifest our eager spirits.

FIRST STEER—Quiet is now enveloping the herd
Like mist descending from the clouded sky,
And eating grass is now the purpose,
Though exercising serves well its intention.

FIRST COW—'Tis well that calves should exercise themselves;
But when their muscles stiffen, and bones harden
They will become more like their mothers,

SECOND COW—Their exercising is a double joy;
For joy for them is joy for us in that
Beholding, we remember all our days of youthful fun.

SECOND STEER—That they don't break their necks is fortunate,
As they indulge themselves in scampering,
Chasing each other, racing hard and fast.

FIRST COW—(*Butts and runs Second Steer from scene*)
Take that and run a little now for yourself.
(*Turns to Bullock*)
But for his awkwardness he might defend
Himself—he knoweth not his powers.

BULLOCK—Although he's awkward, careless too, that hinders
Him not, apparently, from happiness.

THIRD STEER—He verily believes in following
The maxim thus: where ignorance is bliss
'Tis folly to be wise; companion he
To our Third Heifer, though much more cross than she—
A pair of oddities; yoke them together, and where would they go?
The one to forge ahead, the other stay;
Weighed in the balance, strength of brute is down:
Going ahead with pace of slowing snail.

FIRST HEIFER—Methinks the Second Heifer knows that too;
For she accompanied the timid thing
Down to the river.

BULLOCK—Thirsty? well, no matter.
(*Calves begin a frolic, and leave scene*)

FIRST COW—(*To Second Cow*)
We'll have to hurry after our young calves.

SECOND COW—That's what we will. (*Exit both cows*)
(*Second Steer re-enters, and also Second and Third Heifers*)

FIRST HEIFER—It seems that frolics are anxieties—
Anxieties perhaps, though intermingled
With certain reservation of allowance
Sanctioning possible infractions
Of duties properly belonging to calves,
Which when broken cause no reprimand.

THIRD HEIFER—Sires to their dams, and no illusion either.
See there! the cows are in the wake of calves
Who lead like will-o'-wisps around the field—
And not all exercising either.

SECOND HEIFER—Precaution, though, is very well to take
By the discerning and experienced.
Should anything of moment ill betide
The frolicsome and innocent young stock
During their guardian's slack vigilance,
Bad feelings and remorse would issue forth
From ill bestowed responsibility.

THIRD STEER—A certain independence, though, is best,
Being forerunner to initiative
Without the which achievement is relaxed:
Better some risk of present injury
Than future incapacity of strength;
For well they know how vigilance is cheated—

BULLOCK—And make the cows run over time.

SECOND STEER—Fine sport
For calves to run at random here and there —

BULLOCK—And make the cows feel young again.

FIRST STEER—When calves grow tired, then the cows will eat,
Unless too tired to stand and earn their food:
Then resting while and eat in low of sun.
Methinks the calves less novices than the cows
Who soon will learn to eat instead of run,
And taper off in foolishness.

SECOND STEER—I think
However, that the more foolishness that we
Can improvise and so incorporate
Into our celebration of this day
Will be appropriate in general
To the exceeding joyousness of spirit
Which this day has precipitated.

BULLOCK—Oh ho!
Here is some language that would well become
Our brilliant comrade, the Fourth Steer.

FOURTH STEER—Flow'ry;
Yes, that I must confess, though coloring
Of simple things would sure not make them worse.
The peacock, in his highly colored plumes,
Is nothing but a bird in common form.

Then on the other hand, the harsh voiced crow,
If beautifully garbed in peacock coat,
Would tend to melodize his shrill pitched caw.

THIRD HEIFER—Nature though, tends to uniformity
In the arrangement of materials
Blending harmoniously in the whole
And not in the discordance of rude jar.

FIRST STEER—Cease such absurdities. Accept the crow
Just as he is. Injustice! to the crow.
His raven jet black coat does well become
The air line bird of wild and target frame.
Would you diversify his coloring?
A variegated target then were he
If such sheer foolishness were dominant
In his creation.

THIRD STEER—Idle foolishness.
Full stomachs the creator of this talk.
Forsooth, pleasant surroundings do incite
Vainglorious and idle dream-like talk.
Corrals and dry hay are now dismissed from view.

BULLOCK—Let be! They are 'mid joyous gayety.
Now is the high tide until come perfect days;
And idle dreams do justice to the grass,
Which ruminating bovines only know
Induce both addition and subtraction—
Addition as regards dream-like creations;
Subtraction then of recollections past
Involving multiplicity of thoughts

Divided 'mong our profit sharing kind.
Is gastric juice entrancing to your mind?
Is there enthroned oblivion of action?
Are you forgetful of the river?
Methinks it is good policy to drink
Now that the novelty of eating grass
Has passed meridian. Indeed two have already.
Then let's away down to the river.

FIRST—What say the others?

All but Second and Third Heifers

(*First Steer leading, others following, Second Heifer next to last, and Third Heifer last. Second and Third Heifers trail along slowly. All begin slow song*):

Down to the river,
Down to the river,
Drinking the water,
Drinking the water—

[CURTAIN]

SCENE II.—*Entire herd reposing at noon in the shade of cottonwood trees on the river bottom, near the pasture, some chewing their cuds.*

TIME—*Mid-Summer.*

BULLOCK—Now that Old Sol is working overtime,
These giant cottonwoods are friendly shelter
In times of greatest need, and all of us
Owe them a debt of gratitude.

FIRST COW—The calves,
No less than we ourselves, appreciate
The friendly shade, and voice their thankful hearts
In such a manner that is undisputable:
Witness, their lying here when we depart
To graze, and their first coming here at noon.

SECOND COW—Indeed, the calves are now grown old enough
To understand full well the reason for't.
But still they won't, until compelled to see
That their dependence must cease to exist,
Only in a mutual co-operation.

FIRST CALF—One can find plenty of time to eat without
Sweltering in the sun and thus expose
One's self to inconvenience. Oh, the comfort
Which these large trees luxuriously give.

SECOND CALF—Does not the Squire himself lie in the shade
More than the usual one hour at noon,
And days, too, when the heat is not too great
For him to labor at his daily work.
Indeed, some days all afternoon, the Squire
Sleeps in the shade, or smokes his corn-cob pipe—
He's not above leisure and idle moments;
His larder does not suffer either.

FIRST HEIFER—A shrewd reply, involving cunning truth.
Its application does not shorten life;

For thorns themselves, without perfuming flowers,
Will sure invite the loss of much in gain;
A penny wise, but pound in foolishness.

FIRST STEER—A doctrine true, but limited in scope,
Depending on ability of one
To manage his affairs in competition
With those much skilled in scheming for the pounds.

THIRD STEER—Philosophy of sage; but still far short.
The Squire in idling, does not scheme for pounds.
His lack of strenuousness is food for him.
These calves are wise in saving selves just when
To run in glare of sun would do them harm.

SECOND STEER—As if they were to run instead to eat—

FIRST HEIFER—They should consult their pleasures on this point.
Are they as old and as experienced
As are their watchful guardians?

SECOND STEER—Sires to their dams! this has been proven.
(*All except calves laugh heartily at First Heifer.*)

THIRD STEER—Even!
And I trust not exciting anger.

FIRST HEIFER—Fair play should leave no sting.

THIRD HEIFER—Quiet repose is more congenial
In peaceful meditation than in fury.
When in the shade of friendly cottonwoods,
The swimming lines of hazy heat do calm,

And are a soothing balm to our warm blood
Mad, rushing from excessive heat of sun,
The dancing, quivering heat-radiations
Cob-web our eyes and slow the brain to dream,
When we may dream of far-off bovine land
Where all may rest in shade of rural glen;
Where running waters sparkle in the stream,
And all is lovely verdure, carpet-turf
Growing, for us, fresh grass all through the year.

FIRST COW—Fanciful pictures are like lullabies
Sung in the ears of growing calves like ours.
See there, the calves with outstretched heads on ground,
All care dismissed into the realm of sleep,
While others nod until the rising cuds
Dispel the drowsiness of lounging shade.
There could be nothing more appropriate
On this occasion of our nodding heads
Than to have selections sung by our quartet,
Which will, no doubt, arouse our sleeping state
From threatening oblivion in dreams,
(Which may be well deferred until the night)
Into a wide-awake experience.

FIRST STEER—The idea exactly; what say you?
(*All but Calves, Bullock, Third Steer, First Heifer, and Second Cow in unison*):
Let's have the quartet sing.

BULLOCK—In justice to ourselves, and to yourselves,
We will withdraw, shadeward, for some rehearsal.
(*Exit Bullock, Third Steer, First Heifer and Second Cow.*)

FIRST COW—While I dislike to rouse the calves from sleep,
Knowing that slumber doth beget sweet dreams,
Yet I do feel that calves should early learn
To sing, thus learn to qualify themselves
Toward attaining higher prominence
In the society of their own choosing.
Therefore I do not deem it a transgression
To rouse them from their sleep.
(*Goes and butts each calf.*)
Stand ho! young calves
And then construe it wise to do as told.
It is not hard to do; just sing your song—
I mean the song entitled: Your Duet.
(*Calves advance, and stand together and sing*):

THE DUET

1. When frisky calves are young and gay,
All Nature breathes a holiday;
And ev'rywhere we frisk and roam
Imparts the atmosphere of home;
Be it in sun or else in shade,
Good place for us is always made.

CHORUS

Then merry, merry, make the day,
Since Nature is on holiday.
Sing high, sing low, away we go
And where no one should care to know,
For we are sole possessors here
Of all that is esteemed most dear.

2. This is as it should be regarded
That Nature should not be retarded
In anything that might conduce
To have all song and mirth let loose
For our especial favor here
In tones of meaning most sincere.

CHORUS

3. Let Nature then attire herself
In costly garb not bought with pelf,
And let the panorama spread
All 'round the earth from foot to head;
And thus array herself to view
The frolics of her heroes new.

CHORUS

(*Calves bow, and retire a few steps, and lie down. Hearty applause by stamping follows.*)

FIRST COW—You'll have to sing again, my calves; get up,
And then rehearse your song entitled:
When Two Plus Two Are Equal Four.

(*Calves advance again and sing*):

1. When meadow larks are warbling clear,
And bull frogs croaking by the score,
We know that gayety is here
When two plus two are equal four.

CHORUS

Then two plus two are equal four
Without our counting them on ground:
For that we knew here long before
Our A B C's were brought around.

2. When Nature is on holiday,
And dresses up on vale and hill,
We know that time will speed away,
And we can gallop where we will.

CHORUS

3. When owls at night are hooting near,
And coyotes yipping on the range,
We need not have a cause to fear
Since two plus two we can arrange.

CHORUS

4. No fear we have in sun or rain;
Nothing of ill can us betide;
For happiness doth ever reign
Wherever joy is not denied.

CHORUS

(*Calves retire, and lie down. More hearty applause by stamping.*)

FIRST COW—Right well you sing in company now here.
You'll have to learn more songs for your encore.
Then the quartet will gladly share your fame
Which, I believe, will be no less than theirs.

FOURTH STEER—(*Aside*) Now is the high-tide of my career.
(*Stands up, and speaks with great deliberation and inspiration.*)
Magnificently have they sounded the knell
Which should peal forth to all the earth around
That we possess the grandest singers here
Of all the earth. And as the dying note
Of the reverberating bell dies out
Fainter and fainter in the echoing,
These calves stand unchallenged in their sphere,
That they can send dismay into the hearts
Of all contending calves who might engage
In competition of ennobling song.
They are, forsooth, the just embodiment
Of grand and lofty song which the quartet
Will send forth to mingle with the heavens,
And roll as chariots among the clouds
Like thunder rolling in the universe.

SECOND STEER—(*Aside*) A chance for me, to practice, too.
(*Stands up and speaks fervently.*)

This thunder rolling in the universe
Must be associated with the lightning
Blinding the eyes of all contending factors
Who might essay to meet this gifted band
In song, or in grand eloquence of speech.
Eulogy is of little consequence
In my commenting on this grand oration
Brief though it is, yet lofty in conception.
Pardon me, comrade, for manipulating
With such momentous figures of speech.
Then allow me to state in closing,
That I believe that in the corridors
Of time, your names shall be enrolled among
The earth's most eloquent and brilliant names—
Yea, even chiseled in the marbled halls
Of fame, which time will not destroy unless
Buried beneath the ruins of an earthquake.

FOURTH STEER—Your eulogy, while very flattering,
On my behalf, is not too flattering
If spoken in connection with the calves.

FIRST STEER—Methinks too much indulgence in strong speech;
Better the simple tongue without
The extra frills. Let's rise and stretch ourselves.
Then think about a change in program.
(*All but calves rise.*)

SECOND HEIFER—I know what we will do for our amusement.

Let's ask conundrums. We should think of some.

FIRST STEER—The very thing; that will be some change.
(*All lie down again.*)

SECOND HEIFER—Why is the Arkansas like a wild bronco?

SECOND STEER—Because it shows its sand?

SECOND HEIFER—That's partly true, but not my answer.
Because it's treacherous.

THIRD HEIFER—Why is that river
Like the night-hooting owl?
(*All think awhile.*)

FIRST COW—We give it up.

THIRD HEIFER—Because it can see.

SECOND CALF—Oh I know one, too!
Why could the Arkansas be likened unto
The game called tug-of-war?
(*All think awhile*)

FIRST CALF—Because it's wild and game.

SECOND CALF—No; that's not it.
Because it can see-saw.

FOURTH STEER—I think I can propound a question, too.
Why did the animals after the flood
Possess extraordinary education?

FIRST STEER—That must be laborious indeed.
(*All think awhile; then shake their heads.*)

FOURTH STEER—Because they came out from the Ark
and saw.

SECOND STEER—Now if the Ark can see, and also saw,
How many saws will saw the Arkansas?

FIRST COW—Now what's he up to now?
THIRD HEIFER—It's hardly safe to venture in reply.

FIRST STEER—It might be waste of time to think on this.

SECOND STEER—It's not so very hard; the Ark will see.

SECOND CALF—(*To First Calf*)
Not much of a fool, is he?

FIRST CALF—I should say not.

FIRST STEER—It looks much like a rain out in the West.
(*All rise.*)

SECOND STEER—Some summer shower coming up, I
think.

FIRST COW—It seems that the quartet should be re-
hearsed
By this time surely.

THIRD HEIFER—I hear some noise now.

FIRST STEER—It must be them.
(*All listen a few moments.*)

FIRST COW—Here they come.
(*Enter quartet, and advance to the front; Bullock
steps a pace ahead, and announces*):

A BAND OF HAPPY CATTLE, WE.

(*Then steps back into line.*)

1. No matter where we roam or stay,
While eating grass, or old dry hay;
Or tearing 'round in some great raid,
Or lounging in some cooling shade;
From care and anxious thought we're free—
A band of hap-py cat-tle we,

CHORUS

(*Bullock, bass; Second Cow, alto; both seconding.*)

A band of hap-py cat-tle we,
Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, oh yes,
From care and anxious thought we're free;
Oh yes, oh yes,
No cause can ev-er ill be-fall
Oh no, oh no, or no, oh no,
Our hap-py band in Spring or Fall
Oh no, oh no,
We are the best that e'er you see—
Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, oh yes,
A band of hap-py cat-tle we,

2. From North and South, from East and West,
The world acclaims our herd the best,
Which you will not deny I know
Or else with us you would not go;
And others try to join our band,
And sing our joys all o'er the land.

CHORUS

3. So then we'll merry, merry be,
The happy, gladsome cattle, we,
Where e'er we lounge and seek to roam
That place we'll call our happy home,
From care and thought we will be free—
A band of happy cattle, we.

(*Quartet bow, and retire a few paces. Applause of stamping follows. Quartet advance, and Bullock announces the title*):

WE'RE NOT SO FOOLISH AS WE LOOK.

1. Though fools may come, and fools may go,
We're not so foolish as we look;
Fools, always fools, you always know—
We're not so foolish as we look.

CHORUS

Foolish at times, we know we are,
Just as you know, without this song;
But there are times when we go far
To mingle with the sober throng.

2. Then serious at times are we,
However foolish we may look,
And from all foolishness cut free—
We're not so foolish as we look.

CHORUS

3. So then, please don't judge us by sight,
However foolish we may look;

For we are sure that we are right—
We're not so foolish as we look.

CHORUS

(*Great applause after this song. Then is announced the title of last song*):

WHEN DARKENING CLOUDS BEGIN TO GATHER

1. When dark'ning clouds begin to gather
And lightning darts now here, now there,
You then will feel a change of weather
By sniffing cool, moist-laden air.

CHORUS

Then stay close here 'neath leafy bower
And be sure not to separate;
For soon we'll have a summer shower;
And heav'n may open her flood-gate.

2. Then river wild will deeply cover
Without remorse our pasture field;
Away from here we'll go together
To higher ground, this place to yield.

CHORUS

3. Into each life some clouds must gather,
Let fall the rain and cloud the sun;
But as we need the change of weather,
We welcome rain in race well run.

CHORUS

(*Moderate applause of stamping. Quartet retire from front and separate.*)

FIRST STEER—Ominous are the signs of rain indeed!
This song fit prelude of approaching storm.
Hark! hear that nearing thunder growl and roll.

BULLOCK—Right well I knew that rain would come today;
For when we were out there in our rehearsal,
I saw the dark'ning clouds on yonder mountains,
Observed the eastward moving clouds of rain,
And saw the lightning flash clear and sharp.
See there! that flash!
Hear now! that awful crash!
We're in the midst of thick'ning rain!
A flood from cloud burst!
Away! away!! to higher ground! away!!
(*Exit herd on the run.*)

[CURTAIN]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Entire herd, next morning, in the sage-brush, on high ground of pasture, above irrigating ditch, looking down at the river.*

BULLOCK—Heaven indeed did open her flood-gate
Yesterday afternoon and filled the river
To overflowing, flooding all the low-lands
With yellowish and devastating sweep
Coursing in mad career among the trees,
Then inundating homes and all the barns.
Although the water is receding somewhat
From its wild, mad, swirling course,
The swollen stream is yet o'erflowing banks,
And roaring in response to torrents dropped
From bursted reservoir in upper air,
And to the waters rushing down the gulches
Which vie with one another to race down
Riverward the flood-waters of the range.
Near us, the gulch roared well into the night,
Giving its tribute from its water-shed.
Now look you there! see floating down the stream
A swaying house detached from its foundation,
Then borne aloft in powerful uplift.
Truly the flood is reaping its fruition;
And we must marvel at its devastation.
But what concerns us most in our own sphere
Of daily life is that our pasture-field
Has been bestrewn with rubbish and black mud;

And we must seek new pasture-fields for grazing,
A circumstance which will not baffle us,
In that we can invent solution well
In any exigency of occasion.

THIRD STEER—A task which I believe the Squire will solve
On his accord, and thus not leave it bare
Of a solution in our own hands.

FIRST STEER—Doubtless he will; he probably will come
And open a wire gate and let us out
Onto the prairie where we will fare well.

SECOND STEER—Methinks I know a way in which we can
Get out, without depending on the Squire.
Pray grant me leave of absence for a while
And I will see if what I think is true.
(Exit Second Steer)

SECOND COW—He's not to be made fun of, I assure you.

THIRD STEER—He has some fool ideas, though.

FIRST HEIFER—Yes; reckless,
Still he has a memory which serves him well.

FIRST CALF—What does he remember now?

SECOND CALF—Ask the one
Who has just spoken; she knows very well.
(Remainder of herd laugh slightingly at First Heifer.)

FOURTH STEER—He is beginning to appreciate
Where many others fail to give concern,
That is, expressing an appreciation
Of what he recognizes in eloquence,
And what should constitute the art of speech,
When it is uttered in true inspiration.

FIRST HEIFER—He truly doth have that rare faculty
Which you ascribe to him, that is,
Of discerning what should constitute
Eloquence, which is to his credit.

THIRD STEER—I wonder how the Squire took to the flood.
He must have used a boat in getting out
Unless he knew of the impending doom.
His stacks of hay must have been swept away,
Or else they were much damaged by the flood.
Perhaps the Squire, in his calamity,
Has forgotten all about our grass,
And we will have to rustle for ourselves.

BULLOCK—The range is good, no doubt, now that the rains
Have refreshed the prairies for some time.
And as it would be rather difficult,
At present, to live on alfalfa hay,
We must, therefore, take to the prairie range.

FIRST CALF—And that will just suit us; for then we'll have
More room to frisk, to roam, and run our races.

SECOND CALF—Life on the range will tend to broaden us
As we would come in contact with the world.

FIRST COW—If you came in the contact of coyotes
You would not be much broadened.

THIRD HEIFER—And coyotes
Are much more numerous, and bold than here.
When they get hungry they become aggressive.
Traveling more in larger company.
Then it is dangerous for growing calves
To be without protection of large stock.

SECOND COW—The calves will have to run their races near us.
Then the coyotes will not approach so near.

FIRST STEER—This sage-brush is a prelude to the range,
And also prelude for our change of fare
Which is not new in our variety
Of experiences, as they occur
From time to time in our eventful life.

THIRD STEER—The rain, too, has imparted a strong scented perfume
To the dry sage-brush, smelling fresh as does
All vegetation after washed of dust.

THIRD HEIFER—The rain of yesterday, like all good things,
When viewed through the vista of proportion,
In which the strength of ruggedness and weakness
Of frailty are fused in the crucible

Of universal regulation
Of apparently disjointed plans,
Descends alike on just and the unjust—
Descends in absolute envelopment—
Not in a partial, hit and miss descent.
Here comes the Second Steer.

(*Enter Second Steer.*)

BULLOCK—What say you now?
Have you found an exit from this place?

SECOND STEER—Indeed I have; it is as I expected.
The flood has washed in under the fence,
And we can go out through the gulch,
Under the railroad bridges; then climb the bank;
And take the trail across the prairie range;
Cross Eagle Gulch, where are the water holes,
And grama grass in great abundance.

BULLOCK—Clever enough; you take the lead, and we
Will then proceed to a change of pasture.
(*Herd exit slowly, singing*):
Farewell our pasture-field;
Farewell our shady resting ground;
Farewell our pasture field,
Until we once more come around.

(*Repeat softly.*)

During progress to Eagle Gulch, the herd is seen several times trailing across the prairie, singing slowly.

Away, away for grama grass,
And singing songs, the time to pass;
Away we go like heroes old,
The distant future to unfold.
We'll soon be there, 'twill not be long,
When we can join the prairie throng.
Away, away, for grama grass,
While singing songs, the time to pass.

[CURTAIN]

SCENE II.—*Grazing ground on the range, just across Eagle gulch, dotted here and there with high and low cactus, and near a spreading cotton-wood tree on the bank of the gulch. The Fifth Steer, Fourth Heifer, Third and Fourth Cows and Third Calf standing near together on the pasture.*

TIME—*Middle part of September.*

FIFTH STEER—There seems to be more cattle and horses here
Than usual, which is, no doubt, explained
By the fact that many ranchers have turned out
Their surplus stock and also milking cows.
They drive their cows back home at evening,
Thus saving much in feed.

THIRD COW—Then too, there is
Much stock which has been turned out by the ranchers

Who do not take them back until the close
Of the season when they are taken back
And given hay for winter feed.

FOURTH HEIFER—And hay
We seldom see, much less to eat.

FOURTH COW—A fact
Indeed, which cattle on the range well know.
Had we the hay last winter, I well know
That my young calf would have been a companion
For the one in our little band.

THIRD COW—Just so;
You would have saved it without the least of doubt.

THIRD CALF—Hay tastes so good, and is such a change
From the dry grass which we must eat out here
That even when we think of it, it makes
Us taste the hay. The bunches of hay which we
Have picked up on the road were feasts indeed.

THIRD COW—We fare well now. We are not suffering
For hay, and grass is best for you this fall.
It is in winter that we need the hay,
When the range is bare, except the bush and cactus.
Your flesh is rolling and you're growing fast.
You're getting large; you should not make complaint.

FIFTH STEER—Hay though is relished, even when the grass
Is green and growing well. Our range, while good,
Is getting short, and will not last all winter;

And it will need be supplemented with hay
Before so very long, if we fare well.

FOURTH HEIFER—But who is going to supply this hay?
Methinks it best to eat what e'er we have
At any time. And we'll fare just as well
Without our thinking of the future.

FOURTH COW—She speaks with wisdom, though with certain choice.
Show her the hay, and she would run as quick
For it as any other, I assure.

THIRD COW—We have enough to eat right here at present.
Before so very long, the dairy cows
Will be withdrawn, and kept in the corrals.
Then we will be the sole possessors here.
Hello, here comes some range acquaintances,
Or the quartet, as I believe they're called
Among the band of cattle from the river.
We welcome you, quartet, what news you bring?
(*Enter Quartet.*)

BULLOCK—The news of welcome; that is what we bring,
And what could be more welcome on this day?

THIRD COW—Nothing could be more welcome than that greeting.

BULLOCK—You are to be congratulated, too,
In your selecting this good pasture ground
For your abiding place.

THIRD STEER—Indeed, you are;
For where in all this region is there found
A better grazing ground with water in?
Although the water is now getting low
Which will necessitate our leaving here
And following a run-way to the river,
We yet possess the best of grazing land.

FOURTH COW—The best we know, and we soon find the water
If it is in the neighborhood.

FIRST HEIFER—I see;
You speak from old experience on this.

SECOND COW—We knew of you last year; we saw you here.

FIFTH STEER—We're just renewing our acquaintance, then.

BULLOCK—Yes; we see each other nearly ev'ry day,
And so our friendship is well under way.

THIRD COW—Just so; our causes are common to each herd.
Therefore, our interests are mutual;
And anything of interest to you
Will be of equal interest to us.

THIRD STEER—To a herd coming from a river pasture
There is much that appeals to us out here,
Not only in the grazing land itself
But also in the background of our view—
The western border of yon mountain ranges.

FIFTH STEER—They are, indeed, grand, and we like them much.
They're always looming up, as if to speak
In language which, though silent, means so much.

FIRST HEIFER—Their beauty could not be expressed in language.
They vary with each angle of discernment.

FOURTH COW—We never tire of looking at the mountains,
The air is clear, and they extend so far
In line across the state that they become
The heritage of eastern Colorado.

BULLOCK—They are, indeed, the key-stone of the valley.
Beginning on our right with old Pike's Peak,
The mountain famous, in past history,
As the bold sentinel of frontier life,
And as the goal of early pioneers,
The chain extends back to the western sky,
There to be lost to view in cloudless air;
Mentally tracing a range from this apex
Of the convergent mountain ranges until
The view of mountain peaks becomes apparent
In the south-eastern trend of the left wing,
The line prolongs into the Greenhorn Range,
Only to be abruptly terminated
By the rugged southern sentinel—

Old Baldy, standing in obedience
To the commands of his superior.
As if this key-stone system of the ranges
Were not complete to guard the Arkansas,
There stand, alone, out in the southern sky,
The Spanish Peaks, twin peaks, in shape and size,
And near the state line's southern boundary—
The out-posts of the Sangrede Christo Range,
Some peaks of which are seen occasionally
Through the low-gaps left in the eastern Range.
In the apex of this view
There rises the Arkansas, a river swift,
And flowing down between the flanks on guard,
Until the rolling, increasing waters
Pass from direct guard of the sentinels,
And then emerge out into slower flow,
As wider stretches the valley on both sides,
Extending miles in width, and stretching East
Down to the Kansas line—a fertile plain
When made to blossom by the magic touch
Of irrigation. Surely we command
The view of scenery which charms the gods
In picturesqueness and broad range of view.
Surely good fortune shall abide with us
In this, our land of scenery and wealth.

FIFTH STEER—Most eloquently have you painted the view
Such as has never been presented to us;

For we in our routine of prairie life,
Seldom digress from ordinary thoughts
And thus not realize the beauty here.

FIRST HEIFER—Beauty lies often where it's least expected;
And often in the common things of life
Beauty is to be found when overlooked
By those who look up higher than their vision.

FOURTH COW—We see the common things of prairie life
But through routine, neglect their beauty.

THIRD STEER—Which all of us will do; some change is best
In order that the common things best live.

BULLOCK—The change from river pasture to this place
Has been agreeable to us, indeed.
We see much here of interest to us,
Even to the cactus, both the high and low.

THIRD COW—We eat some cactus during winter time,
When grass is gone and the cold weather comes.

THIRD CALF—How can you eat the cactus? It is so thorny.

THIRD COW—When it is frozen; then we eat it,
Though I hope it will not be on our fare
This winter.

THIRD CALF—I hope so, too.

FOURTH COW—So we all.

THIRD STEER—Our river band expect to have much hay
To eat this winter, when we get corraled,
Before very long, when the third crop will be stacked.

FIFTH STEER—It must be good.

BULLOCK—Our choice this time of year.
And if we plan a raid on haystacks soon,
We'll let you know and let you share in it.

FIFTH STEER—That would suit us; how kind of you; it would
Afford us pleasure, indeed, to accept.

BULLOCK—And great our pleasure in inviting you.
Adieu: We must now join our band.
(*Quartet bow.*)
ALL FIVE—Adieu, adieu (*as Quartet exit*).

THIRD CALF—Just think, we'll get some hay.

FOURTH COW—Not so sure; we'll see to that later on.

FOURTH HEIFER—How eloquent they were; they must have practice.

FIFTH STEER—If I could be around them for awhile,
I think I could speak well myself, it gives
Me much encouragement to practice, too.

THIRD CALF—Could I learn, too?

THIRD COW—You can in time, if you
Possess the gift, or know the rudiments.
Then inspiration will do the rest.

THIRD CALF—I'll get inspired, I know I will.

FOURTH COW—You should
Be more concerned, at present, in your life,
That is, about your living on the range.
Ability to speak and move your hearers
By the indulgence in strong language,
Should be your second thought; for when the effort
Is all affected, it falls far short its mark,
And you will be the mirror to reflect
That which you may not see in your conceit.

FOURTH HEIFER—It should be placed in the same catalog
As singing, extra culture for the soul.
It is intended to relieve the cares
Of life as well as elevate ourselves
Onto a higher plane. Who gainsays that?

THIRD COW—For us, it is much like the fox and the grapes.
Though we admire and yearn much for the fruit
It's always high—too high for us to reach.

FIFTH STEER—Native ability though, counts for much;
And in our lexicon of enterprise
Failure is found when we make it ourselves:
For even though the goal is not quite reached,
Effort, directed well, spells out success.
We are what we create within ourselves,
And nothing can scarce turn our course, if we
Keep up the motion of the current.

Let's change our grazing spot, and eat until
The sun goes down. (*Exit Quintet.*)

[CURTAIN]

SCENE III.—*The same, only farther away; the octet standing near together.*

FIRST STEER—I presume that the quartet has left our herd
For the purpose of rehearsing some new songs
That they intend to sing before our band
And we will readily excuse their leave
Of absence, for we all delight in songs
Sung by our popular quartet.

FOURTH STEER—A fact
Indeed. Their absence here is joy for us,
In that they build the future well
For happy time of song festivity.

FIRST COW—If it's rehearsing, glad times are ahead,
Though it may mean that they are planning
To strengthen our position at some point
Where we are weak, though unbeknown to us.

SECOND HEIFER—If they were planning for such purposes.
They would consult us in their interview.

SECOND STEER—No matter; we are equal to the task
Of steering clear of any difficulty
That might present itself from time to time.

In fact, it is the best for us that we
Decide upon the issues for ourselves
And not depend upon our keen quartet.
Make independence working capital.

FIRST STEER—There's argument in that I will admit;
But who will not concede that they are best
To lead; in witness whereof, I recite
The incident when we were saved from the flood.

REST OF HERD—Just so!

FIRST COW—The flood—who does not fear that word?
Dramatic termination of sweet song.
It seems but yesterday, and yet how long.

THIRD HEIFER—It stands indelible, though rush events
Before and after. Why this memory?
Dramatic climax. Need I state more?
Yet, although it has changed our mode of living,
It might be termed a blessing in disguise,
For it has given us new views of life;
Enlarged our vision, whetted our appetites;
And in every way a benefit.

SECOND HEIFER—An education then for all the herd
Especially for the young, growing calves;
For they can see much that is new to them,
Other than the grama grass on sandy soil,
Namely: the rattle-snakes, the prairie dogs,
And other things of interest to all.

SECOND CALF—Indeed we have observed a rattle-snake
Going down a prairie-dog hole in their town.

FIRST CALF—And we have seen some owls out on the ground
Quietly sitting near an opening
Of a dog-hole. Do they all live together?

FIRST COW—It has been thought that they live all together;
But they are common enemies; and dogs
Wage warfare lest they be exterminated;
And so do not inhabit the same hole.
The burrowing owls inhabit the same town,
Living in separate, forsaken holes.
The snake, however, seldom enters
A hole; but if he does, he's liable
To be entombed by the aggressive dogs
Who sound the warning of his coming,
And then advance to quickly seal him in.

SECOND STEER—He then would find starvation in the hole,
And so a prey of his rash enterprise.

FOURTH STEER—Fool venturer into the net of death.

SECOND STEER—He knoweth not the danger of his scheme.

FIRST STEER—The owls must be exempt from such entombment,
And share the willing partnership of dogs
Who dig the holes, and then allow their homes
To be inhabited by these shrewd owls.

FIRST COW—That seems to be the case, though the young dogs
Are relished by the owls.

THIRD HEIFER—This partnership
Of prairie dogs and owls is similar
To that of the cuckoo and other birds
When they hatch out the egg laid by cuckoo:
Parasitic in their nature of existence:
Shrewdness of the cuckoo and owl, indeed.

SECOND HEIFER—Suggesting a conundrum which I will ask.
Why are the eyes of owls like these cuckoos?

SECOND CALF—Because they are a pair o' sights.

SECOND HEIFER—Correct.

SECOND STEER—Now if these same old birds are parasites,
When would their sights be sighted from their sites?

FOURTH STEER—No one could use their logic on that one.

FIRST STEER—It may be foolish, but yet logical.

SECOND HEIFER—It must be something like the Ark will see.

SECOND STEER—It is when sites are quoted thus; sites @ par.

FIRST COW—Our comrade must be feeling fine; perhaps
He has some more conundrums to amuse
Us, or else some diversion from routine
Original with him; if so, let's hear.

REST OF HERD—Just so!
SECOND STEER—If I cannot evade this thing,
I'll sing a solo of my composition,
Which is entitled:

OF ALL THE TIES, THE CACTI IS THE BEST

1. Though we may graze in states free from the cacti,
The truth of this you then will surely know:
That though the flowers bloom all through the showers,
The cacti binds us to old Mexico.

CHORUS

Oh yes, the cacti is the best of ties
That bind the states or countries near;
We like to graze where grows the lovely tie,
And not be called a moose or deer.

2. Let goats graze on the mountain tops and hill-sides,
Let the mosquitoes swarm the swamps and lakes,
They have their ties, and we'll not take them from them;
For here with us the cacti is what takes.

CHORUS

3. Let berry bushes and bee-gums charm old Bruin,
We'll not object, because we know it's best,
For that's his tie, and I am not a foolin'—
For all of us, the cacti is the best.

CHORUS

4. Let the creatures have their place for grazing,
Be it near Canada or Mexico,
Their tie for them is something worth knowing—
The cacti *is* the tie for us we know.

CHORUS

(*The herd applaud by stamping and Second Steer responds for encore by announcing*:)

A RAMBLING MONOLOGUE

Give us the prairie where abide the owls
Living in prairie-dog holes underground;
Where we may hear the snakes when rattling rattles
In giving warning to the passer-by;
Where we may browse on sage-brush, gray and large,
Thus change our diet from sweet grama grass—
The best of grass that grows on prairie land,
For other than the river grazing field
This place is the best we have yet found.
We have the water here to drink until
The water holes go dry. Then we make way
Down the dry run-way to the river,
Which is good exercise for all of us,
And keeping us gay in happy mood of life;
For we all know that we can ring the bells
Which sound our joy where'er we go, you see,
And when we start the joy-bells ringing loud
We are the envy of all creatures here.

So then, it can not be at all disputed:
That in this clear, fresh atmosphere, our bells
Ring far and wide; we are the best, you see.
(*Applause of encore.*)

FIRST STEER—Now that we're entertaining, we might hear
What the Third Heifer has in store for us.
She might give us an essay or some speech,
Or else some song which we would like to hear,

REST OF HERD—Hear! Hear!

THIRD HEIFER—September days will soon have passed away;
And with their passing by, there ushers in
More fitful weather, chilling gusts of wind
The harbinger of winter-time to come.
Now is the perfect time of autumn season,
Fresh, cool air from the mountains crowding out
The heated air of Summer; thus infusing
New life and keen awakening to start
New tasks with vigor, and our intellects
Renewed and vitalized by elements
Which are vitality in composition.
Clear at any time is our atmosphere
Except when storms are darkening the sky,
Making it possible, while even here,
At this long distance from grand Pike's Peak
To see the smoke, as it goes curling,
Off from the summit, from the cog-rail train.

Surely this possibility of sight
Through the clear air of Colorado state,
Is a remarkable occurrence here,
So great a distance from the railroad train.
Unique is our position on the range
When such rare sights are viewed by cattle kind;
Fortunate then, indeed, are we in land
Of scenery grand and pasture land of wealth.

(*Applause by stamping.*)

(*Enter Quartet.*)

BULLOCK—So ho! you're having fun here by yourselves.

FIRST STEER—That we have had, just as you had, no doubt,
When from our company you did take leave.

BULLOCK—Yes; we have had some entertainment since
We left your ranks, and have made known our plans
To some range cattle, in case we make raid
On some alfalfa haystack near the river.
And if we have a banquet, we'll invite
Some range acquaintances to share in it.

FIRST COW—That would be charitable of us all
To share a feast with the less fortunate,
And would be double joy for us in that
We would receive and give that which is good,
Cheer some dark life with cheerful light of joy.

BULLOCK—We'll first investigate what we can do.

FIRST STEER—Then invitation given after that.
Let's drink; then eat until the sun goes down.
(*Exit herd*)

[CURTAIN]

SCENE IV.—*The same, in middle October, the herd standing together late in the evening.*

BULLOCK—Now that investigation has been made,
The loose wire-gate accessible to us
In our approaching the alfalfa stack,
And entrance thereto feasible to us,
Down the gulch in which we came out on the range,
All that remains for us to do this eve,
Is to extend the invitation quick
To our acquaintances who promised us
That they would be most glad to join in feast
Whenever we would bid them come to it.
Third Steer, you go, and bid them come at once.
(*Exit Third Steer*)

SECOND CALF—The quintet, especially the calf,
Will welcome hay since it is new to them.

FIRST CALF—Right well he will, if he is much like us;
For I can hardly wait until we start.
They must get tired of eating old dry grass.

FOURTH STEER—The Squire will find that hay can be destroyed
In other ways than by a roaring flood.

I wonder if our range acquaintances
Are versed in any of the arts of speech,
For instance, in the art of eloquence,
Or else possessing the great gift of song.
Methinks they're not especially endowed
With any of the cultured arts.

SECOND COW—You can't
Always tell whether they're endowed or not
With any talent;
They may be equal to our band in that.
And if they're ignorant, we should instruct
Whenever it is posible, without
Offending them. And then in teaching them
We'll find that they can teach us many things.

FOURTH STEER—Yes, we could learn much knowledge of the range
From them, a knowledge that would do no harm
To us in any manner, whatsoever.

SECOND STEER—Not in the least would it do harm to us;
For any superstructure must be built
Upon foundations of enduring kind
If it is built to last for any time.

FIRST COW—We should not be concerned about such things
When in such anxious moments to approach
The place where we may feast—ill thoughts at time
When gastric juice should be entrancing us.

FOURTH STEER—Well, here they are.

(*Enter Quintet and Third Steer*)

BULLOCK—Third Steer, you take the lead.
'Away hence to the banquet at the Squire's.

(*Exit herd with Quintet in the rear*)

SONG FOR ALL BUT QUINTET

'Away we go to banquet at the Squire's,
Singing along the way to cheat old Time.
Sing high, sing low, away we go, so ho!
For food to satiate our appetites
In feast of drink and song: make glad the night
With ringing melody along the way.
We won't get back till morning from the feast,
But what care we: the moon shines clear and bright
Out in the starry night: so what care we—
'Away, away we go for banqueting.

[CURTAIN]

ACT III.

SCENE—*Entire herd feasting around the haystack.*

BULLOCK—Indeed our appetites are sated,
And eating is mechanical—
Ambition satisfied to gorge down hay
With all that is composed of speed and greed
Until our stretching paunches do indicate
The satiation of our appetites.
We are now in the climax of desires
Anticipated by our band for weeks—
Climax in the fulfillment of desire
Not in dramatic sensibility;
For where is there the situation
In which fulfillment of dramatic art
Is more complete and more in evidence
Than here in this, our perfect execution
Of that which has been uppermost in mind
In time gone past; which crowded out all things
Not in connection with our banquet feast.
Surely we occupy the central stage
Toward which past and future happenings
Converge as if an amphitheater were filled—
Convened to witness here the spectacle
Of climax evident in its fulfillment.

FIRST COW—If we command an amphitheater,
Figuratively speaking, already
It must have viewed a climax intimated
In the fulfillment of appetites

Belonging to the younger stock: for see
They have not been partaking of the hay
With the keen relish that characterized
Their early gorging of alfalfa hay—
Preliminary entertainers they
Until the older stock take up the scene,
Apparently uninterrupted in chain,
As one by one, cease eating in the feast,
Until we now present the spectacle
Of an entire fulfillment of desire.

BULLOCK—What say our friends from off the range, on this?
Do they still hunger for alfalfa hay?

FIFTH STEER—While acting in capacity of spoke steer
For the quintet invited with your band
To share in this great banquet of your own,
It can be said, and safely too, that we
Are filled with hay and thus await your bidding
To do whatever you see fit to do.

FOURTH STEER—(*Aside to Second Steer*)
I wonder if he can be eloquent.

BULLOCK—Then if we all have feasted well tonight,
There could be nothing more appropriate
During our midnight revel than to have
An entertainment here of toasts and songs
Proposed and sung by members of our band.

However, this will not exclude our friends
Who have agreeably enlivened us
By their acceptance of our invitation.
And in the course of entertainment here,
We would be glad to hear what they would give
Individually or else in groups.
And we propose that informality
More than formality shall guide our course ·
During the progress of our entertainment.
So all draw near and form a semi-circle
Behind the speakers who stand at the head
Out in the front between the curving lines.
(*All form semi-circle, with Bullock at head of one side, and First Steer opposite*)
Some toasts have been prepared: we'll hear them first.
Before I call for them, I'll propose a toast
Entitled: SALUTATION TO OUR BAND.
Comrades, we are assembled here to-night
In the participation of that which
Has been in store for us for some time past.
Our thoughts have been directed toward it
During the past, obscure it seems to us,
Now that we are around the hearth-stone here
Experiencing the enthusiasm
Incident to a sumptuous feast just past;
When contemplation tends for happiness
And also a serenity of mind
Which so dispels into oblivion

All dark forebodings of disaster
That we seem only conscious of the present—
It is here then, for us, that culmination
Is evidenced in its entirety,
'And nothing short of folly from ourselves
Could mar this scene of mirth and joyousness.
Favorably is nature clad tonight
To give this scene a setting of bright splendor:
Witness, the moon attired in regal dress
Of brightness unexcelled in coloring
And tones of softness, thus illuminating
All list'ning earth with festival array
Of queenly beams on such a night as this.
Unique is our position here tonight
In that green coloring of hay does tempt
Our appetites, a contrast to that which
Has been in evidence out on the range,
When for weeks past dry grass has been our fare.
During the time when grass began to die
Until the present night, we often yearned
For green alfalfa hay for feasting times.
'And so we dedicate this feast tonight
'As an appreciation of success
Crowning our well-laid plans with kingly crowns
Upon the brow of endeavors past.
We now will have response from First Steer.
(Bullock takes position at head of line, and First Steer advances to give his toast. Great applause)

FIRST STEER—I construe this applause to be applause
Directed toward our distinguished leader,
And not applause directed toward me.
(*More applause.*)
Well he deserves the plaudits of his band,
For where could we find a leader to replace
Him in the valiant service rendered
Toward his company of cattle kind.
In proof of this I need but cite one instsance
In which his foresight saved us from disaster,
Namely: the flood.

REST OF HERD—*Well said!* (*Applause*)
And though his leadership at other times,
Has not been so dramatic as that one,
It has yet been directed well throughout,
Until we now experience the best
That is our lot so far to fall heir to,
Namely: this banquet of good cattleship
Among a band who prize his leadership
Far higher than our words could emulate.
We also should extend our gratitude
Toward our musical organization
That of the quartet whose aid extended
To the Bullock in his banquet plans,
And aided materially in his work.
We are, indeed, thankful towards them
In service rendered by their song;

And it is not an imposition
On your good will and time, I feel assured,
When I commend that praise is due to them
On this occasion of festivity
And thankfulness. Give them the hoof of cheer.
(*Applause by stamping, and a shout from all but quartet*)—Long live the quartet!
In closing, I will simply give the toast
In eulogy extended to the Bullock
By all concerned: may he live long and prosper.
(*Great applause*)

BULLOCK—We now will hear from our Third Steer.

THIRD STEER—Responding on behalf of the quartet
On whom much praise has been bestowed by you,
It certainly gives me much pleasure now
In trying to return the compliments
Which, as has been intimated, are greater than
Any expression which words can convey.
Before endeavoring to frame response,
I wish to dwell somewhat at length upon
The theme that music has its charms. No where
Save in the realm of Nature, do we find
Such blending of harmony as is
The execution of rhythmatical
And the shading of its fundamentals,
Combined to charm, in us, responsive chords
Dormant in their potentiality
Until awakened by the harmony
And its rhythmatical constituent,

Appealing as the melody of song
Set to the melody that moves one's soul.
Examples that will illustrate this point
Are numerous to you. Emotions varied
As are exemplified in our emotions,
Can be attuned to corresponding airs
Interpreting emotions of composer
And the emotions of his listeners
Providing they are of the temperament
That the composer would have them to be.
The difficulty of interpreting
Music correctly then, provided it
Has been performed on basic principles,
Together with expressive rendering,
Depends upon our own interpretation;
Whether we have ourselves attuned to airs
We listen to, both in mechanical
And in true inspiration of sensitiveness.
Hence, we find that among the majority,
The simple melodies appeal to them,
Awakening the chords of common ties
Which must appeal to all regardless of rank,
If they feel moved by lofty variations.
Then it was that our melodies so simple,
Attuned your souls that afternoon of rain,
Changing from mirth to seriousness sure;
Quickened your minds and limbs to action swift,
Without exciting you by shock of danger.
Verily, music hath its charms.

(*Third Steer steps back into line. Tremendous applause.*)

BULLOCK—Our Third Steer has indeed defended music,
Or rather his conception of it
Needs no defense. It truly hath its charms.
We now will have our Second Steer address
Us or else give a song according to
His taste. He certainly has something good.

SECOND STEER—I will respond by giving you my lecture:

IF THE MAN IN THE MOON COULD SHOUT TO US.

Could one look down upon the world and see
The earth revolve around the solar sphere
Attended by celestial bodies bright
Reflecting a splendor of dignity
Commensurate with our festivity,
Both in array and their joyousness,
Though silent in the frigid halls of blue,
Could one, I state again, if placed on high
Riding the heavens in the Queenly orb,
Look down upon the earth and view where
Tonight in our great festival of joy,
We would be like the man who is in the moon
And try to shout, his very best to shout!
But then he can't, he's frozen up you know
From eating too much ice, ice cream, more ice
Than cream. His smile is there. Of course it is,
It's frozen in the ice; and he is helpless,
Deserving pity from us all tonight:

For we are in a gaiety of time
With mirth and joy let loose; shout! if we want,
But lo! look at the man who is up there.
He wants to shout, and shout out loud and long.
And then to think his smile is frozen shut,
As if he were a mummy petrified.
He never loses sight of earth; oh no.
He hovers near, and smiles and smiles at us
While in our frolics, and in our great feasts;
Whether engaged in song or oratory;
He's watching us, you can depend on that.
He's jealous, too, but he does not commit
Himself while riding in the heavens there—
Fairmindedness—yes unexcelled at that—
Exemplar of true generosity.
Some one might say he's frozen up, that's why
He is not shouting now, but only smiling;
But oh, such incredulity of self.
As if to view festivity of mirth
While out in silent halls of azure sky
Were not enough to cause him shout for joy.
We would if we were he, so give him credit
For that which we would do ourselves without
Any reserve of power from our lungs.
If the man in the moon could only shout
How happy he would be, but since he can't
Let us do what we can to make him glad;
Expand our lungs and shout hurrah! just twice.

ALL SHOUT—(*While looking up*) Hurrah! hurrah!
(*Second Steer steps in line*)

BULLOCK—For some diversion, we might have the calves
Sing a duet. They know some clever songs.

FIRST COW—Yes calves, step out and sing your song entitled:

FEASTING HERE WHILE THE SQUIRE SLEEPS SOUNDLY ON

(*Calves advance and sing*):

1. While the moon shines bright and serenely calm
Out in the starry night, so clear and bright,
We leave our prairie home to feed on hay,
To feast and then to revel all the night.

CHORUS

Feasting here while the Squire sleeps soundly on
All through the night until the break of day,
Knowing not of our merry banqueting—
Eating and wasting his alfalfa hay.

2. Then merry, merry let us be tonight,
The world is gay, so why need we be sad,
We are the revelers here banqueting
Where a good time is surely to be had.

CHORUS

3. And if we don't get back till break of day
No matter, we are banqueting tonight

And seldom eat alfalfa hay so green,
So juicy, tender, coloring so bright.

CHORUS

4. The Squire will never know the difference,
Whether we were the ones in here, or not;
He can not tell who were in here tonight,
Why then should it concern us for one dot.

CHORUS

(*Applause*)

BULLOCK—We'll ask the calves to sing again before
We leave, if we have time. There are more toasts
Which we will want to hear.
We will now hear from our First Heifer.
She will address us on the theme entitled:

THE ETHICAL VIEWPOINT OF BANQUETS

FIRST HEIFER—Comrades, we are assembled here tonight
In one of those dear institutions that
Gladden the pathway of our life
With pleasant times coincident with feasting,
Speechmaking, singing, and all other phases
Of an esthetic joyousness connected
With banquets held by us from time to time.
The actual time spent in banqueting
Is time well spent apart from feasting here
On hay so palatable and inviting,
Sending us all into oblivion
Forgetting all dry grass and prairie fare;

All times, routine with cares of daily life,
And lifting us beyond all thoughts of care
Into that realm of bliss that moulds our life
Into that atmosphere of moral plane
Promoting culture of esthetic charm
Which is attained by social company—
Of those we value highly in our life.
While we must follow the routine of life
In all its ups and downs of joy and sorrow,
Which is accepted to be our lot on earth,
There is, I state again, that bliss of joy
Found in the social atmosphere of banquets
That doesn't exist in any other place—
A joy of pleasure throbbing through us all,
Contagious with association here
Of those whose joy is bubbling over.
We are to be congratulated then
In meeting here without the loss of one
In our career so far more fortunate
Than has befallen others whom we know.
Could we invite the more unfortunate
And see them share in feasts of hay so rare
It would refine our coarser natures
And tend to modify their bitter feelings
Incurred to some extent, perhaps, in race
Of life less favorable than ours so far.
Then the esthetic value to be gained
Is found in giving and receiving cheer,
Not in our aim to be all egotists,

But in demeanor calculated to win
Respect and friendliness while even in
Spirited rivalry of entertainment.

(*First Heifer steps into line. Applause*)

BULLOCK—The Second Heifer will now speak to us
About the interesting subject theme:

LIVING BENEATH THE LUCKY STARS.

SECOND HEIFER—If we were to ascribe our lucky state
Of living fortunately all through life
To any one particular good reason,
It would be that of an astrology
Wherein we are safe-guarded and also prompted
To act unconsciously, it seems at times,
In our evading dangers threatening
Us seriously, by no other cause
Than that through the great science of the stars.
That they, in their illuminating light,
Unrivalled in their beautiful array
Of piercing, spotless, shining, light so pure,
Can wield a wand of magic charm o'er us,
Warding off danger continually near,
Though varying in its intensity,
Through some unconscious manifestation
On our own part, is not denied at all.
In fact, the science of the stars has long
Been recognized by men of known repute;

Men who are versed in sciences so deep
Relating to some guidance here on earth
Through the resultant phase attendant birth,
And similar to cause and its effect,
That we would be in grave danger of assumption
On our own part, if we were bold enough
To overturn, or even criticize
A scientific truth based on a study
Wherein their observations are upheld
By demonstrations in their sphere of life,
Convincing all, beyond the least of doubt,
That they are right in their astrology.
We should congratulate ourselves tonight
That we enjoy the blessing of the stars
Shining resplendent in their jewelled beams
Wafting the charm protecting us from harm;
Whether the danger is afar or near;
Whether a premonition of its coming
Is known to us, or not, in conscious state;
We are to be congratulated, I say,
In our acceptance of this ruling power.
(*Steps into line. Applause*)

BULLOCK—While we are on the subject of the stars,
We might hear our Third Heifer on the theme:

THE BEAUTY OF THE HEAVENS IN THE NIGHT

THIRD HEIFER—High arched overhead from lowly earth
To vaulted skies, the heavens reach across,

Shining down as a brilliant diadem
Studding the canopy of the heavens
In one vast panorama of bright splendor,
Proclaiming in their silent, starry music
The choir forever shining in the sky.
Each star in that vast multitude of light
Emits rays twinkling to our lowly earth,
Feeble, however, that may seem to us,
Yet strong enough to pierce the distance
Spanning between that twinkling star and earth—
Nearer to us, by many billion miles,
The Queen of night, in her Majestic beauty,
Takes up the reign left her by King of day,
Ruling with the gentle touch of softened rays
Original from the far distant sun.
When we behold the moon in regal dress,
Appearing as the solar complement,
Large, full grown, rich in golden offering,
It is a view, indeed, of mellowness
Attractive in the richness of its color.
Anon is seen some shooting star impelled
Through the illimitable space in sky,
Lighting the heavens in her trail of fire,
Brilliantly glowing in her darting head,
Tapering off in lessened fire behind,
Forming a vivid, startling exit
Away from the tranquil upper region,
As through the atmosphere the fire ball darts,
Dazzling in its appearance and its progress.

Go out at night beneath the starry sky
When silence is convening there with you,
And then behold the beauty of the stars.
If you are a worshipper of Nature,
You will become impressed with awe of sight
Transcendent in its lofty excellence,
And having no comparison on earth
For grandeur and an eloquence of beauty.
(*Third Heifer retires. Great applause*)

BULLOCK—Our sentimental heifer has indeed
Lived up to her established reputation.
(*More applause*)

FIRST STEER—I will suggest that the quartet should sing
Some song; thus change our program.
THE HERD—Hurrah! Let's have them sing.
(*Quartet advances and Bullock announces the title*):

WE WON'T BE BACK TILL MORNING FROM THE FEAST

1. Out in the starry night, the moon shines bright,
Lamp of our feet while coming from the range
To banquet on the Squire's alfalfa hay,
Where for a feast we surely did arrange.

CHORUS

(*In parts*)
We won't get back till morning from the feast,
Oh no! Oh no! Oh no! Oh no! Oh no!

We will enjoy ourselves here banqueting;
Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes!
No cause can ill betide us here tonight
Oh no! Oh no! Oh no!
We are the revelers here banqueting.

2. All Nature here is clothed in handsome dress,
In jewelled splendor of her brilliant stars
And moon in mellowness, reflecting light
From far off distant sun, apart from stars.

CHORUS

3. We now are in the high tide of our life,
And make the welkin ring with song and cheer
Which echoes back from silent barriers—
And well we know that it's good to be here.

CHORUS

4. May this great feast be followed by some more
In which glad tidings of our joy will ring,
And may we live together happy, free,
To always speak so cheerfully and sing.

CHORUS

(*Quartet separate. Applause*)

BULLOCK—We will now have the pleasure of a speech
From one of our most eloquent in speech—
Our Fourth Steer.

FOURTH STEER—(*Aside*) Now I will wax most eloquent.
Mr. Toastmaster:
Comrades, I feel much elated
To be in this distinguished company

The Moonlight Banquet

Assembled here tonight in an institution
That has endeared itself from time immemorial
Until the present night, as gradually
It has become a factor of importance
In the ascending scale of human progress
Wherein the sensibility of beasts
Characterized by its benignity
Forward assimilating all that which
Affiliates with the omnipotence
Of kindness all pervading through your ranks,
Is allowed untrammeled expression
During occasions of philanthropy,
As manifesting our unselfishness
In crucifying greed and selfishness
On the clean altar of a righteousness.
Propitious to our cause of joyousness
Incident to our feasting sumptuously
On this good hay, there is the feeling
Of exultant joy, and unalloyed sense
Of pleasure, innate in essential form,
Compelling us to gratify ourselves
In that whatever is humility
And pleasure, innate and exercised freely
In its manifestations by you all.
Then, in extolling impropriety
Of egotism impendent haughtiness,
Is but affirming a qualification
Compatible to a demeanor
Which all of us so heartily approve.

Though mundane in conception and growth,
The banquet, in its sensibility
Of philanthropic motive of endearment,
Could be compared to the abode of bliss
Wherein an ectasy of pure delight
Doth dwell continually among the blest.
Concluding, I reiterate
That I feel greatly honored to address
Contemporaries here beyond a cavil;
And feel that I cannot exaggerate
In its essentiality, the pleasure
Of innate joy, and heightened by contact
In our association here tonight.
I feel that joy is not alone with me;
But that it is pervading through you all,
And unifying you more firmly than
Any of you are cognizant.

(*Steps into line. Great applause*)

SECOND STEER—Oh no one knows how dry I am.

BULLOCK—We will now have the pleasure of a speech.
Delivered by a spokesteer from the range.

FIFTH STEER—It is, indeed, a pleasure here tonight
To speak in the capacity of spokesteer
Acting on the behalf of the quintet
Invited here to share in this great feast,
And to be entertained most royally
By your great gifted and cultured band.

We, then, acknowledge that we are your debtors
Both in your feast and in your entertainment.
We seldom have the privilege of joy
Attendant such a feast as this tonight:
And so appreciate your kindness shown
Far more, perhaps, than any of your band
Can personally realize himself,
In that you have enjoyed a higher state
Of living than has been our lot so far.
But it is in this fact, alone, which I
Desire to emphasize in special terms.
That though more favorably situated
Than we are in our sphere of life
You are observing that you can employ
Your greater means to good advantage
In your alleviating our routine
Of prairie life of simple fare and joys,
Diversifying monotony of life
With that expression of this kindliness
Shown toward us: that you are not above
The common level of good will and cheer,
No matter what the station of our life.
We have enjoyed ourselves most heartily:
For who could not on such a night as this—
A night of feasting, singing and great speeches;
Making the welkin ring afar and near;
Creating an atmosphere of joy and mirth
Wherein all are on equal terms of rank.

Could we some other time reciprocate
This favor granted toward us tonight,
It would be special pleasure on our part
To return the gratitude we owe your band.
(*Steps into line. Great applause.*)

BULLOCK—We are as much recipients as donors
As far as gratitude is valued
Concerning favors that have been extended
To the quintet. We value company
Such as is found among the prairie kind
And as for talent, they are apt to be
As great as we. This spokesteer speech is ringing
With eloquence, indeed, and would do credit
To any of our band. And I propose
The toast in cheers: may the quintet live long:
Hurrah! hurrah!
Herd gives cheers—May the quintet live long!
Hurrah! hurrah!

BULLOCK—Our cows have yet some toasts.

SECOND COW—I do not care to give a toast tonight.

FIRST COW—Nor do I care to speak; it is now late
And if I spoke it would detract from what
Has been well given; and we should now drink
And then return before the break of day
To our home on the prairie.

FIRST STEER—It seems to be the general opinion
That we should leave this place and get our drink.

BULLOCK—Then we adjourn.

(*Herd mingle and slowly begin to leave, Fourth Steer leading.*)

FIRST CALF—(*To Second Calf*)

Wasn't that a brilliant speech the Fourth Steer made?

SECOND CALF—(*Hesitatingly*)

I—don't remember. What was it he said?

(*Exit herd singing*):

Down for a drink, down for a drink,
Down to the river for a drink;
How dry we are, how dry we are,
Oh no one knows how dry we are.
(*Repeat softly*)

[CURTAIN]

ACT IV.

SCENE I—*Quintet standing together by themselves on the range across Eagle gulch, the next afternoon.*

FIFTH STEER—It seems old times again to be back here
On our old stamping ground to eat our grass
Which may have lost its savor, as of old,
Since we have dined on good alfalfa hay,
Yet it is relished as variety
Of fare, since we have been more fortunate
Of late, when we have gained the sympathy
Extended us by the kind river band.
They think they will soon leave us on the range,
To be coralled, or else turned loose down there.
In their old pasture field; to be corralled
At night; and then fed on alfalfa hay
During the night and in the morning time.

FOURTH COW—That will be good for them, but not for us.
Still we should not complain; they're kind to us.
And if we do not have more feasts
Or even see no hay at all this winter,
The memory of that great festival
Will linger down the pathway of our life—
Dramatic one could say in the impression
Left in our minds, indelible in fact,
As a tangible thing in occurrence.

THIRD COW—They're kind, indeed, more so that they are strangers
Almost, and fortunate in living well
On hearty fare that is a treat to us.
Their calves will not die of starvation,
Such as befell one of our own last winter.

THIRD CALF—I wonder if we could break in all winter,
And keep from starving. I should think we could.

THIRD COW—Oh no, we can't do that. The Squire will see
That he must guard his hay from disappearing.

FOURTH HEIFER—If our Third Calf should get caught eating there,
He would become ensnared and disappear.
(*All laugh*)
I should think that the Fourth Steer would disappear
From view since he performed so haughtily
Last night in his most strenuous attempt
To be so eloquent, and then not know
What constitutes the art of eloquence.
Big words, and hollow sounding phrases and clauses,
Are what he thinks should sway the multitude.
Our Fifth Steer seemed to make a good impression
Among the band. The Second Steer is smarter
Than many credit him. He was so dry
When his distinguished comrade terminated
His speech, that he could not hold back his thoughts.

FOURTH COW—Oh he's no fool; his lecture, too, was good.
He can be eloquent, too, if he tries.

FIFTH STEER—If I could have prepared myself a speech,
As did that sentimental heifer,
On some assigned theme, I think I should have
Done well, but not so well as did she for
I think she is some stronger than the Bullock,
And whom we know, from his great speech out here,
Is strong. But what a speech that Fourth Steer made.
Of all attempts to be so eloquent,
And then to reflect himself an ignoramus,
His is the most ridiculous I know.
Just think of such expressions as these:
"Of egotism impendent haughtiness;
Compatible to a demeanor;
Of philanthropic motive of endearment;
Contemporaries here beyond a cavil;
Any of you are cognizant," and more
Of his expressions of endearment.
He just reverses the rule of eloquence
With which the river band seem well acquainted,
And that is nothing more than what I state:
When any one will rise in eloquence,
He will descend in language on a level
With those whom he addresses. Where then is he
Who soars and revels in flambouyency?

Detached and floating high above his kind.
If he should fall what then? A bitter fall,
If he would recognize it as a fall;
But then he wouldn't. He'd suffer death before
Seeing his folly of flambouyancy.

THIRD COW—The river band seem highly gratified
That he indulges in his brilliancy.
Good sport for them. Make fun of him at will;
And yet he never recognizes it.

FOURTH COW—Mental gymnastics for his company:
Shrewdly poke fun at him, and he not know.
They used to butt the Second Steer around,
But they have learned to have respect for him
And treat him better than they did.

FOURTH HEIFER—For pure
Foolishness mixed with cleverness, he does
Not have a peer. He sings well, too, they say.

THIRD CALF—I thought his lecture was just grand. The man
Up in the moon must have felt bad indeed,
When he could not give a loud shout last night
In answer to our shouts while banqueting.
He must have heard, for we all shouted loud
And everything was so quiet like
That we had every chance to be heard.

THIRD COW—He must have cracked the ice up there last night
Or else he cracked his face, while straining hard

To free himself from his imprisonment—
Cruel amidst such joyous festival.
And then there will be cold sores on his lips
Contracted while engaging in his task
Of freeing self from his adversary there,
Grim, cruel, relentless, grasping him
As tentacles of octopus entrapping
A victim in cold blooded heartlessness.

FOURTH HEIFER—But elevating more than anything
I ever heard was the appeal to Nature
Uttered by that refined Third Heifer
Discoursing on the beauty of the heavens
Arrayed in starry gems of glory there
Amidst the azure robes of stilly night,
Studding o'er head in canopy unfurled
From earth to vaulted skies a panorama
Of splendid vista both in magnitude
And brilliancy so rare, not marred by hands
In their creation, or in their shining on
Down through the ages past and future;
Not changed by our terrestrial upheavals
Disturbing earth and marring scenery;
Not changed by physical occurrences
So common to our life on this old globe,
But in continuing to shine so fair
In silver beams of light, as if they've shined
But for one day in twinkling, sparkling light.
They are the ceaseless, changeless, beauty fair,

Undimmed in lustre shining through the ages—
The grandest view, by far, on our old earth.

FIFTH STEER—So ho! our Fourth Heifer is inspired, indeed.
She is as sentimental as her rival;
And not flambouyent, either. I think she
Ought to have been the spokeheifer last night.

FOURTH COW—A pupil of the old school, I surmise,
In point of brilliancy apart from frills
Tacked on by artificiality.

THIRD CALF—She has been practicing some by herself
Since she has heard the Bullock speak so well
That day he came with the quartet and spoke
About the mountain scenery near us.

THIRD COW—Her practice, though, would not make her so brilliant,
Although it might unearth discovery
Of latent qualities of eloquence
And beauty of expression such as used
By her just then, a while ago.

FIFTH STEER—Our speeches would stand comparison with theirs,
Either in style and point of brilliancy
Combined to have appeal in oratory.
Ruggedness, innate in essential form,
Enters in, more or less, in speaking well,
Devoid of artificiality.

Of artifice ingenuously used
Missing the mark by indirect approach.

FOURTH HEIFER—They don't deny that we are just as good
As they in anything that they can do.
For they well recognize the fact that art
Of any kind may be made weak and flimsy
By too much cramming and luxuriousness
Surrounding germs of promising intent.

FIFTH STEER—That is why we have more chance
In our developing some arts out here
Than some more favorably situated.
They have the extra means, but through neglect,
Or through the weakness of dependence on
Those whom they look for aid, that they will fail
Often when such dependence is withdrawn,
Leaving them much weaker than they were at first
Without the extra means at their command.
Certain ruggedness and initiative
Are necessary then, if we achieve.

FOURTH COW—Then certainly the Second Steer should achieve,
And so, also the Fourth Steer should achieve,
If independence and initiative
Should be considered as the capital
For an achievement in their oratory.

THIRD COW—The Fourth Steer, though, is lacking ruggedness
And loftiness in true expression.
His oily language and hyperbole
Are lofty, for they soar away above
The multitude—too lofty for true worth,
The Second Steer, though foolish as he is,
Could speak and sing, or do most anything
Of credit to his band. No fool is he,
Though foolish he may act, for way down deep,
He is sincere, and has the keenest sense
Of what should constitute pure foolishness
Apart from a sublimity of thought:
For while he may use the hyperbole,
It is for humor, and not for oratory.
While he is reveling in foolishness
The kernel of his thought is far too deep
For the ambitious and flambouyent steer.
Which goes to say that some possess the art
Of driving home a lesson, even while
They are pretending to discuss the theme
Apparently in nothing but a vein
Of humor, frivolous though it may seem.

FIFTH STEER—But where could we find such a jolly band
Of cattle anywhere in all the world;
For while they may not sanction some in their band
As far as eccentricity may go,
Yet they use that as working capital
On which to base their joys in rain or shine.

They are the ever happy band of cattle,
No matter what befalls them, here or there,
They are serene, complacent, not caring
Whether a danger is near them or far.
They are the ever happy band of cattle.

[CURTAIN]

SCENE II.—*The same, on the same afternoon, only farther away, the river band of cattle standing by themselves.*

BULLOCK—The stars were shining luckily last night,
Brighter than they have ever shone for us,
Judged by the high tide of joyousness
Flooding in from the ebbing tide of joy,
Rising still higher than is usual;
Buoying us up in ectasy of cheer;
Flooding the low-lands of the somber cattle;
Urging them upward into realms of bliss;
Obliterating cold responsiveness
From their chilling recollections of the past;
And stocking them with buoyancy of mirth
To cope with battles present and to come.

THIRD STEER—It certainly did let in rays of hope
That the world still shines on in its brightness,
Though I believe that they enjoy their life
Fully as well as we; and have ideals
No lower than are ours. Accustomed life
Has much to do with vision of discernment:

Therefore their happiness may be assured
To be as actual as ours.

FOURTH STEER—Admitted; but their participation
In an esthetic sense, in that great feast,
Would have the tendency to stimulate
The cultivation of those qualities
Toward ideals in which a recognition
Is given prominence of those ideals
That regulate the temperaments of minds,
Placidly smoothing, as it were, the coarseness
And roughness incident to coarser life.
Ignoring the finer polish which adorns
The life of the most highly cultured.

SECOND STEER—Polish may have the finesse of that
Which is deceptive, thus alluring you
Into belief of lofty excellence.
Crediting superiority of being,
And yet deceiving you by subtle fraud
More ignominious through such pretentions
Of inward faith through highly polished mirror
Reflecting not what it pretends to be.

FIRST STEER—Repartee, skillful in its term of truth
Applied in general conception.
And yet who in our band is too refined:
This culture would do grace to all of us.

BULLOCK—Our present culture now is eating grass,
Though much of real culture here is found

Among the prairie herds as far as truth
Of genuine worth is displayed in life.
And our life here this summer has indeed
Broadened our conception of what
Should constitute our education.

SECOND CALF—This prairie life is the best kind of life
For growing stock who want to learn the ways
Of the outside world apart from fences and trees
And saucy magpies in the cottonwoods.
We've seen the snakes, the dogs and the coyotes;
Have heard the rattling snakes, the barking dogs
And the coyotes while yipping all around.
The owls, too, I forgot, those parasites
Who have clear sights all through the darkest nights.

FIRST CALF—Staring and piercing those old parasites.
Although they live out in the country here,
They live in towns, that is, prairie dog towns.

SECOND CALF—They're metropolitan in character,
And parasites at that, who have the sight
To see affinity in social ways
To bring reward in cleverness well planned.

SECOND HEIFER—They must consult astrology themselves,
Or else are lucky to be born just when
The signs are favorable to their cause
Much like we are without the parasites,
Although we have a pair of sights to see.

THIRD HEIFER—We are most fortunate, so far, in life
To keep our band together, faring well,
Scheming for hay, outwitting the good Squire
In stratagem successfully well done.

SECOND COW—Although much hay was eaten in the night,
It was not ill used, and will benefit
The Squire, except what the quintet has eaten.

FIRST COW—Well said; what is our gain, is gain for him
Except the hay that was left under foot.
Aside from the intrinsic value gained
In the consumption of alfalfa hay,
There is derived the extra quality
Of benefit accruing from a change
So necessary in all walks of life,
Diversifying the monotony
Of fare, and minds grown weary by routine.
When such is the condition of our life,
We will not gain so rapidly in flesh
Until our diet is diversified,
And minds relieved from narrowness of view.

SECOND COW—You do the subject justice when you say
That change of fare and also change of mind
Will broaden us in proper breadth of view
In which the status of perception
Is magnified to its correct adjustment.

Hence, greater possibilities will loom
Up before the quintet, enlarging breadth
Of their horizon, as could not be done
In any other way but that in which
We choose to stimulate activity
Of their mental process of perception.

SECOND STEER—The Squire will have his mental qualities
Enlarged and his horizon lifted up,
Though I think with expense of temperament
Vexed by the general displeasure
In knowing that much hay has disappeared
Through nothing but a folly on his part.

THIRD HEIFER—His star is not so lucky as our stars.
(*All laugh*)

BULLOCK—He will accept it though, as a joke on him,
And he will not lose any sleep for it,
As he is philosophical in mind;
And does not worry over the frivolous.
The hay destroyed and eaten there last night
Is not to be compared to the great flood
As far as devastation is concerned
Both in the hay and other property
Destroyed last Summer by that agency.
He may have reached the point when a large loss
Will not endanger sleep from its full time.
And then besides, the fact that we broke in
And feasted on hay, may make him think on us:

That it is time that he were taking us
Off of the range, and feeding us his hay;
That chilly winds are chilling us out here,
Shifting as best we can on grama grass
Now dry and scarce among the sage-brush here:
That his compassion will be turned on us
When, round his fire, he smokes his pipe of cheer.
He fares well yet; on that you can depend,
And it will not be long until we fare
As well as he.

FIRST STEER—Corrals down near the river
Are more inviting now than ever known.
Each season in its time of ripening,
Into a fruitful harvest has abode
Where best we can enjoy its rich fruition.
The prairie now has lost its charm for us
Since its fruition has most disappeared.

FOURTH STEER—Tasting of sumptuous fare hath indeed
Imbued in us the sense of satisfaction
By actuality, more than by dreams,
Anticipating fond luxuriousness,
Reveling in that state of livelihood
Wherein the savor of alfalfa hay
Is a creation of that which is false.

THIRD STEER—Correct in reasoning, I surely say;
But what sensation could there be more pleasant
Than the anticipation of a feast
The like of which we had down there last night;

When scanty vegetation clothes the prairies;
When sweeping winds are blowing hard and cold;
Where natural protection is so scarce;
Then it is when we naturally turn
To fanciful creations, bettering
Us still the more when we are realizing
Fond dreams of sweet alfalfa hay in stack.

SECOND HEIFER—Such feasting will not spoil us in the least;
But the quintet will have to exercise
Strong power of their wills in overcoming
An attitude of temporary gloom
In their acceptance of their harder lot
Befalling them in race of prairie life.

FIRST COW—It may cause them to diverge from prairie fare
Becoming pirates from the range to steal
Through any barrier surrounding hay,
Successfully evading all attempts
To hinder them from sharing in more feasts.
But if they do, their hurts and wounds from wire
Will have poor balm to soothe them in the cold.

SECOND COW—Recklessness often wins against the wire.
But if there are enough of wires stretched tight,
Their cause will have no favor in their trade;
Instead a disappointment stares them hard,
Cruel, no doubt, but yet of no recourse.

SECOND STEER—Before all fences were rendered barriers,
They would have filled their stomachs many times,
Until, perhaps, some rancher would corral
The wandering intruders, and then feed
Them on alfalfa hay, as though they were
His own, which they would be, if not soon claimed.

THIRD HEIFER—It would be a most happy termination
For them, if they were fortunate enough
To fall as heirs, inheriting good fortune
In their adopted homes, bequeathing them
The just and sacred heritage of keep.

FIRST STEER—We should be more concerned about ourselves.
They will get through the winter, well, perhaps.
We may get hungry here ourselves before
The Squire will feed us his alfalfa hay.
It takes some rustling now to satisfy
Our hunger while we are out on the range.
The dairy cows have been withdrawn from lack
Of grass; for too much traveling reduces
The flow of milk, essential to their keep.
The Squire, perhaps, thinks he can stretch our feed
Until he is compelled to take us back.

BULLOCK—That is the situation now with us.
And, no doubt, he has fixed his wire gate well,
Excluding us from further banqueting.
So we must now accept the situation,
What e'er befalls, until the change is made,

Which will remove us from our simple fare
And place us where we will have much to gain.
Patience should then command its due in us.
Stability comes not from anxiousness,
But rather a forbearance of our likes
To do that which rushes us on to hazards.
The time will pass more speedily with us
If we accept the present as it is,
Feasting if it is possible to do;
But if such fortune does not smile on us,
We will be happily concerned in life
Enjoying the fruition of the range,
As well behooves our kind where'er we are.

[CURTAIN]

ACT V.

SCENE—*Their old pasture field on the river bottom, near the cottonwoods.*

TIME—*Early November.*

(*Enter all but quintet with high spirits and frolicing*)

FIRST STEER—Indeed we were born under lucky stars,
Since we're permitted to run in here this fall
And winter, gamboling if we desire
In exercise which sends the pounding blood
To keep us warm in chilly atmosphere;
Limbers the joints, and stretches the muscles;
Refreshing body, and the mind with vim
Which the Squire's alfalfa hay has stored in us.
Corrals are good confinement in the night
When friendly sheds protect us from the winds.
But through the day this river pasture field
And grove of cottonwoods is best for us
Where we may drink and run, and frisk and play
Throughout the middle of the live-long day.

BULLOCK—You would do wrong if you did not speak thus;
For it is but the outburst of our spirits
When we indulge in gamboling hard;
Chasing and butting, running all around,
Until we're satisfied in exercising
Our stored up energy of nutriment.

It is, in fact, the season of the year
When quickening blood must course in arteries,
And acting as a stimulant to warm
Us is a quickened energy of action.
Well we enjoyed the shade last Summertime,
When overtime Old Sol was working long,
And we lay down beneath the friendly shade,
Conversing through the Summer afternoons,
Or singing songs of sentiment or cheer,
And dozing into sleep, all care dismissed
Into that land where dreams are nourished sweet;
Lounging around in lazy attitude;
Eating green grass in cool of evening;
But now how different it is from then;
For if we seek the trees, it is that we
Go for protection from the chilly winds,
And also change of run-way in our runs
As to and fro we frisk and roam at will.

THIRD STEER—We are most fortunate, indeed, in that
None of our company, so far, have been selected
To journey to that realm where shambles reign:
From where no traveler has yet returned.
And we have reason to believe that none
Of us shall be compelled to go that way,
Until, perhaps, another year or so.

SECOND STEER—The Squire must live on swine, or else the calves
Would have already graced his dining board.

But as for us, the Squire must feel most kind.
He has his reasons though, and we will fall
The victims of some butcher's cruel block.
Sooner than we would think it come to pass.

FOURTH STEER—Carnal of you that you would think on this.
We should exalt ourselves to higher view
Than to indulge in carnal appetites—
Appetites in the sense of dignity
Compatible to sensibility
In which the carnal appetites are placed
Far down the list comprising cultured bovines.
That we are envied by all the bovines,
Needs no elucidation here by me.
Why then should we drag down ourselves in thought
When it is possible to qualify
Ourselves in that exalted sphere of bliss
Which knows no condescension of our pride.
I'll run away now for some exercise.
(*Exit Fourth Steer*)

SECOND STEER—And I will follow him.
(*Exit Second Steer*)

FIRST CALF—(*To Second Calf*) And here we go.
(*Exit both calves*)

FIRST HEIFER—Two of a kind pursuing oddities.
Though one is foolish, the other smart,
The foolish one is smarter than the smart.

SECOND COW—We ought to make them entertain our band
When they return from running through the grove.

SECOND HEIFER—If nothing else is suggested, I suggest
That they should ask conundrums when they join
Us here.

THIRD HEIFER—That will be good. The Second Steer
Is capable though, when it comes to singing.

FIRST COW—The Fourth Steer, though, if left to his wishes,
Would paralyze us with his eloquence.
So I believe that we should make them ask
Conundrums, now that they have left us alone.

THIRD STEER—We then could vary our proceedings here:
Propound conundrums, sing some hearty songs,
Either in solos, or in combination.
There is much music here among our band
Even among those outside of the quartet.
These members should have training and be coached,
And then our chorus work will be improved.

BULLET—Yes, training of the individuals
Would greatly aid our choral company,
Though singing in the chorus stimulates
Desire to sing alone: timidity
Soon disappears, and then they do their best
When not supported by all the company.

FIRST STEER—When they return, we'll have them do our will,
No matter how perplexing it may seem.

We have some time before we are corraled,
And fed our evening's alfalfa hay.

THIRD STEER—Asking conundrums is much easier
Sometimes, than answering them properly.

THIRD STEER—It will give us an appetite for hay,
In mental recreation, which we need.

FIRST STEER—Just so; the mind should not be overlooked.
Since we are now well fed in the corrals
Without our rustling for grama grass,
We should indulge in hearty recreation
Whenever it is possible for us,
Developing along the cultured lines,
Now that we have the opportunity.

BULLOCK—Yes, though the cold may come, and snow may fall,
We have no winter cares to worry us.
We can be happy as we were last Spring,
And that we know was something marvelous:
When even all the feathered creation
Did vie with us in envious delight:
Chirping dissatisfaction of their state
In tones of positiveness, loud and clear:
We were the fit embodiment of song.
Ringing all through the air in melody.
We should be well contented in here this Fall;
For even Summertime has its own pangs;
Witness: the flood so fresh in memory.
Where once was green with grass, now rubbish is.

FIRST COW—Which will supply the Squire with wood to burn,
Keeping him warm through all the wintertime.
Ill wind that blows not something good in turn.
The sediment, too, fertilizes the land,
Which is a gain if the river does not wash
Some land away in wild, careering course,
Shifting from one side to the other.

SECOND HEIFER—More harm than good, though, comes from river floods.
They fill the irrigating ditches with sand,
Black mud, and sediment; much time is spent
And labor, too, in cleaning them again.

SECOND COW—We know there is much harm from river floods,
But then the river needs much channel room,
And farming near it must result in loss.
Floods, too, are often caused by forests cut,
Denuding soil of its vegetation,
Causing the snow to quickly melt and run,
Gathering fast, and swelling mountain streams:
Folly of man doth have its penalty.

SECOND HEIFER—The flood last Summer, though, was caused by burst
Of reservoir in air: for that the man
Was not to blame, except for living near
The river bank, and thus exposing self
To a high flood of inundating sweep.

THIRD STEER—Here come the rebels.
(*Enter Second and Fourth Steers and Calves*)
Now you must give ear
To what we say, and promise that you will
Obey without recourse on your own part.

SECOND STEER—You mean to say that we should have no voice
In doing that which would be pleasing you.

FOURTH STEER—That is an imposition heaped on us
To do your bidding without our consent.

THIRD STEER—Oh it is nothing more than you should do
If you think well on entertaining us—
A privilege that you should deem a favor
In that you have been entertained by us—
Many the time, the place and season.

FOURTH STEER—If 'tis a speech, I'll do my very best.

FIRST STEER—Oh yes; you're willing; that is all we want.
We just want you to think of some conundrums.

FIRST CALF—We can do that, I know, without much trouble.

SECOND CALF—Asking conundrums is much easier
Than answering them in correct reply.

BULLOCK—Then who will be the first to query us?

SECOND STEER—I am; why was the flood like the great deluge?

THIRD HEIFER—These two floods could be alike in many ways.

SECOND STEER—I mean in the respect to our own selves.

SECOND HEIFER—Because there were some animals submerged.

FIRST COW—Because they rushed to higher ground.
(*All think awhile*)

BULLOCK—Because all else was left behind.

SECOND STEER—No; they are not quite right; because it saved
The best in species.

THIRD STEER—That's a good one.

FOURTH STEER—Why was the banquet like the monument
Erected on Bunker Hill?

SECOND COW—So that must be
A patriotic one.

FIRST COW—Because it paid
A tribute to much ingenuity.

FOURTH STEER—A good reply, but not the best one though.

FIRST HEIFER—Because the carnage was commemorated.
(*All laugh*)

FOURTH STEER—Good answer but not mine. Because it was
Provocative of eloquence. (*All laugh*)

BULLOCK—The calves
Should know of some conundrums by this time.

SECOND CALF—Why was the banquet like the siege of Yorktown?
(*All the queried say together*)
Why was the banquet like the siege of Yorktown?
(*All mumble the query in whole, or in part*)

FIRST HEIFER—Because there was capitulation.
(*All laugh*)

SECOND CALF—No:
Not quite right.

THIRD STEER—Then, because hilarity
Was much in evidence, when victory
Had come.

SECOND CALF—No; just because it was attended
By the allies.

FIRST CALF—Why should giraffes be envied most of all
If all the animals were banqueted?

THIRD HEIFER—Because he could reach farther than the others.

BULLOCK—Because his kick would be severe; and so
He would compel attention to his toast.

FIRST COW—I should think that the elephant would be
Envied of all, for he could blow the most.

(*All laugh*)

SECOND COW—Then just because he could look down on them.

FIRST CALF—That would be true; they would look up to him.
But I was thinking of an answer thus:
Because his taste of food would last the longest.

FOURTH STEER—Now if the animals were banqueted,
Why should the elephant be the chief speaker?

FIRST COW—Not what I stated, because he blows the most?

FOURTH STEER—No. that's not it.

(*All think and mumble*)

FIRST HEIFER—Because he is the largest.

(*Fourth Steer shakes his head*)

SECOND HEIFER—Because he is the smartest of them all.

THIRD HEIFER—Because he weighs the most; so careful,
Deliberate, pronouncing plain and loud.

FOURTH STEER—Not quite; he has the trunk, or main part.

(*All laugh heartily*)

SECOND STEER—What animal has been the most unlucky?

THIRD STEER—We ought to guess that question, surely.

BULLOCK—It must be the giraffe, for all his parts
Get terminated in the neck.

FIRST STEER—Perhaps
The elephant: his smartness costs him much:
He can perform in circuses, or draw loads.

SECOND STEER—What say the others now?
(*All think again*)
The zebra, for
He wears the stripes.

BULLOCK—We must confess you have the best of us.
We now might vary here somewhat, and ask
Each other some conundrums, when we think
Of them.

SECOND COW—How do we know the cow had jumped
Over the moon?

SECOND STEER—Because the man up there
Has had his ice-cream—separated cream
At that.

SECOND COW—Correct. (*All laugh*)

FIRST STEER—I think we should have run
Away, instead of they.
REST OF HERD—Just so! we should!

BULLOCK—We knew they were as capable as we,
And thought that they could be depended on.
To entertain us here this afternoon.
Conundrums are great favorites with us.
So let more follow, and try answer them.

THIRD HEIFER—If all the animals were banqueted
Why would the lion be the best toastmaster?

FIRST CALF—It must be that he is the king of beasts.

THIRD HEIFER—That would not necessarily be it.

FOURTH STEER—Because he has the greatest dignity.

THIRD HEIFER—Because his roar would silence all disorder.

THIRD STEER—Why was the donkey incorrectly named?

SECOND CALF—Because his bray does ill become him so.
He should be called the shrill bray.

THIRD STEER—Because he is called a don-key on the key.

BULLOCK—What animal in Africa is known
As the most stubborn one?

SECOND STEER—The lion would
Be a most stubborn one, if injured.

FIRST CALF—So would the hippo pot a moose.

BULLOCK—I think
The zebra would be the most stubborn one,
For he is three-fifths bray.

FIRST HEIFER—Big bears are like
Boa constrictors. Why?

SECOND CALF—Because they hug.

FIRST HEIFER—Correct.

SECOND HEIFER—If monkeys were all large, why would they make
Good baseball pitchers?

SECOND COW—They make a long swing.

SECOND HEIFER—That would be preparation for a throw.
My answer is: they throw the cocoa-nuts.

FIRST STEER—Why is the Squire like an Indian?

THIRD STEER—Because he does not worry for the future.

FIRST STEER—Characteristic of them both, that's sure.
My answer is: he smokes his pipe of peace.

FIRST COW—Why was the Squire's alfalfa hay much like
Good watermelons in a patch?

FIRST CALF—Because
They were both good to eat.

BULLOCK—Because they are
The best when stolen.

FIRST COW—Both are partly right.
It was appropriated for better use.

BULLOCK—We now have asked conundrums all around.

FIRST STEER—It seems to me that singing is due.
We might have the quartet sing for us

ALL BUT QUARTET—Let's have them sing.

BULLOCK—We'll sing our song entitled:

SOON THERE WILL COME THE WINTER TIME

1. The autumn season now is past,
When vegetation all is dead;
When sharp, cold winds are blowing here
And frost is in the air o'er head.

CHORUS

(In parts)

Soon there will come the winter time,
Tra la, tra la, tra la, tra la,
When frost and snow are glist'ning white;
Tra la, tra la, tra la, tra la,
When we are feasting on the hay
Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, oh yes,
In our corrals there in the night.

2. Then in the winter days we roam,
As o'er the hardened ground we play,
To chase, to butt, and racing hard
All through the middle of the day.

CHORUS

3. Most days are clear and sunny here,
Thus soft'ning air and making bright
The days in winter time for us,
'And cheering us all through the night.

CHORUS

4. So happy then we'll ever be
Down here in our old pasture field,
'As through the winter time we go—
The many pleasures it will yield.

CHORUS

(*Great applause*)

FIRST STEER—I think our Second Steer would gladden us
With one of his own solos; for he is
One of our best.

REST OF HERD—Just so! let's have the solo.

SECOND STEER—I will sing one of my own compositions:

DOWN WHERE THE ARKANSAW IS ROLLING ON

1. Far up in yon high mountains, picturesque,
I come to rush through canyons steep and high;
'And then to flow down to the valley wide
To irrigate the hay when it is dry.

CHORUS

Down where the Arkansaw is rolling on,
Down through the groves of cotton-woods of old;
Down where the magpies harp so saucily
Down where are dwelling heroes who are bold.

2. Though rushing floods may come to drive us out
Onto the range to graze on grama grass,
We all agree that here is the best place
We could find anywhere for time to pass.

CHORUS

3. Beneath the cottonwoods we rest so well,
In summer time when sun is shining hot;
'Tis then we fall as heirs to sleep and dreams—
Such pleasures as those could not be forgot.

CHORUS

4. We love to tread the sand and boulders there;
We love to trail along through weeds and brush,
When going down to the swift Arkansaw
To satisfy our thirst in cattle rush.

CHORUS

(*Great applause*)

BULLOCK—That solo will only be strengthening
Our love we have for the old Arkansaw.
Now that we are in the mood for singing,
I think the calves can sing some cheerful song.

SECOND CALF—Our favorite song is one we sang last Spring.
We know it by the title of:

OUR DUET

(*Calves sing the Duet as given in Act I.*)
SCENE II.—*Applause for encore.*
(*Calves then sing several choruses*)